



WORKERS
HISTORY MUSEUM
MUSÉE DE L'HISTOIRE
OUVRIÈRE

2022 Annual Report



A Year in Review

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Rapport du Président



En 2022, la situation est presque revenue à la normale. En juin 2022, nous avons tenu notre première Trivia Night depuis 2019. En décembre 2022, nous avons tenu une réunion du Conseil d'administration en personne et une soirée sociale qui a suivi cette réunion. C'était la première fois depuis 2019.

Le grand événement de 2022, est le déménagement à l'Université Saint-Paul et le partenariat avec *l'Atelier* d'innovation sociale Mauril Bélanger. *L'atelier* "est un espace bilingue inclusif (physique et spirituel) de collaborations, de formation, de partage de savoir et de soutien aux innovations sociales." (site web de *l'atelier*) *L'atelier* publie un rapport annuel d'activité que l'on peut lire sur leur site web. L'équipe de *l'Atelier* nous a reçu les bras ouverts et déjà nous retirons des bénéfices de ce partenariat. En conclusion, en mon nom personnel, au nom du conseil d'administration, des bénévoles et des membres, je remercie le Comité spécial composé de Bob Allen, Art Carkner, Megan McLeod et Barb Stewart pour l'excellent travail accompli.

Dans mon rapport 2021, je notais brièvement comment le Musée avait dû encaisser des pertes de revenus causées par la pandémie. Les organisations ouvrières tenant leur congrès et autres réunions par zoom, il devenait impossible de tenir un kiosque permettant de rencontrer les membres et vendre nos produits. J'avais exprimé mon inquiétude que si les organisations ouvrières continuaient de faire leur réunion sur zoom, cette perte de revenu pourrait être permanente. Or nous avons vu le retour des réunions syndicales en personne. Ce qui nous permet de maintenir un kiosque et, par conséquent, d'augmenter nos revenus. Espérons que la situation se maintiendra au beau fixe.

Nous avons collaboré avec The Historical Society Of Ottawa. Le 28 septembre 2022, le Musée a co-commandité une communication donnée par un de nos membres, Brian McDougall, intitulé *Failure to revolt? Why Winnipeg had a general strike in 1919... and Ottawa did not*. Notre vice-présidente Megan McLeod a présenté les activités du musée et le président Wilbray Thiffault a introduit Brian à l'auditoire. Nous avons aussi informé nos membres de la conférence du 11 janvier 2023 de l'HSO portant sur les mairesses Whitton et Dewar. Le président Ben Weiss de l'HSO, en remerciement de nos services a fait de Wilbray Thiffault et Megan McLeod, membre honoraire de l'HSO.

Il y a eu, bien sûr, les activités régulières du musée comme par exemple la production du calendrier 2023. Nous invitons les membres à lire le rapport de nos activités qui permet au musée de remplir sa mission de faire connaître l'histoire des travailleurs et des travailleuses de la région d'Ottawa et du Canada. C'est une mission essentielle que nous devons mener à bien.

Solidarité!

Wilbray Thiffault
Président



President's Report



By 2022, things were almost back to normal. In June 2022, we held our first Trivia Night since 2019. In December 2022, we held an in-person board meeting followed by a social get together also for the first time since 2019.

The big news in 2022 was the move to Saint Paul University and the partnership with the Mauril-Bélanger Social Innovation Workshop. *The Atelier* "is an inclusive bilingual space (physical and spiritual) for collaboration, training, knowledge-sharing, and support for social innovations." (source: *The Atelier* website). For more information on *The Atelier*, please refer to its website and namely its annual report. The team welcomed us with open arms, and we are already reaping the benefits of this partnership. In conclusion, on behalf of the Board of Directors, volunteers, members, and I, a big thank you to the Ad Hoc Committee of Bob Allen, Art Carkner, Megan McLeod and Barb Stewart for their excellent work.

In my 2021 report, I briefly spoke about the Museum and how it was coping with the loss of revenue incurred due to the pandemic. With labor organizations holding their conventions and other meetings on Zoom, it was becoming impossible to run a booth where we could meet with members and sell our products. I had shared my concern that if this trend were to be maintained, our loss of revenue could be permanent. However, we have seen a return to in-person union meetings which allows us to staff a booth and therefore increase our revenue. Hopefully, this augurs well for the future.

We have been working with The Historical Society of Ottawa (HSO). Indeed, on September 28, 2022, the Museum co-sponsored a paper by one of our members, Brian McDougall, entitled *Failure to revolt? Why Winnipeg had a general strike in 1919... and Ottawa did not*. Vice-president Megan McLeod reported on the activities of the Museum and our president Wilbray Thiffault introduced Brian to the audience. We also informed our members about the January 11, 2023, HSO conference on Mayors Whitton and Dewar. In appreciation of our service, HSO president Ben Weiss made Megan McLeod and Wilbray Thiffault honorary members of the Historical Society.

There was, of course, the regular business of the Museum such as the production of the 2023 calendar. We invite all members to read our activities report which allows the Museum to fulfill its mission of sharing the history of working men and women in the Ottawa region and across Canada. Ours is a mission of utmost importance.

Solidarity!

Wilbray Thiffault
President



Board of Directors

President:

Wilbray Thiffault

Vice-president:

Megan McLeod

Secretary:

Paul Harrison

Treasurer:

Barb Stewart

Members-at-large:

Penny Bertrand
Christine Goneau
Richie Allen
Meranda Gallupe-Paton
Bob Allen
Arthur Carkner

Institutional members:

David Yazbeck
Richard Weintrager
David Dean

Trustee:

Robert Hatfield
Bonnie Robichaud
Linda McLaren



Events Attended

COVID-19 was still a major factor in 2022 with most events held virtually which meant we were unable to attend and have kiosks at the conventions.

We were able to hold one Trivia Night in June with 62 participants. It was so nice to see everyone in person. However, we had to cancel our planned Trivia Night in October because of illnesses that hit several teams and resulted in us cancelling the event.

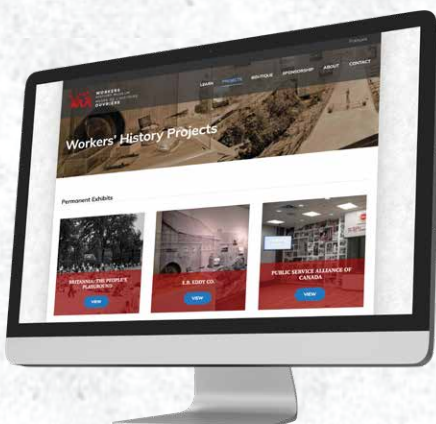
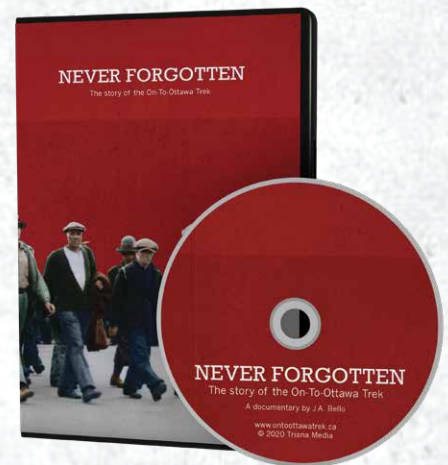
We were able to partner with the Atelier d'innovation sociale Mauril-Bélanger at Saint Paul's University to hold two CLiFF (Canadian Labour International Film Festival) events in November. Due to late promotion, the attendance was small but everyone enjoyed the videos. We plan on partnering again with the Atelier for CLiFF 2023.

We were lucky to have a booth at two union in-person events in the fall of 2022. During October the Union of Taxation Employees held their Presidents' Conference with 100 people in attendance. In November we attended the PSAC National Capital Region's Women's Conference with about 60 people. These events were the first time in three years that we got to see some familiar faces. Fundraising at these two events was every successful with 50/50 draws plus sales of our books and videos.

Projects

Never Forgotten

We stalled on the production of some DVDs of Never Forgotten but finally got them done for the end of December. They will be available in January 2023. The cost will be \$20. Contact the treasurer@workershistorymuseum.ca for more details.



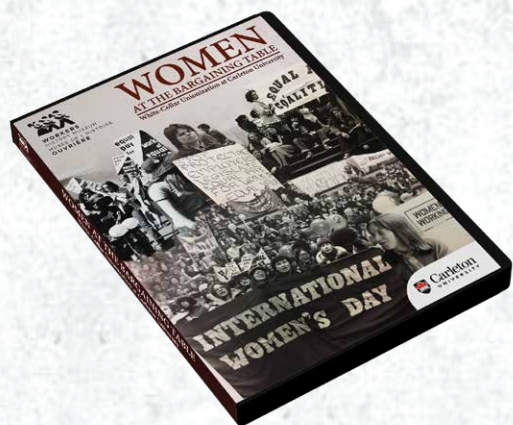
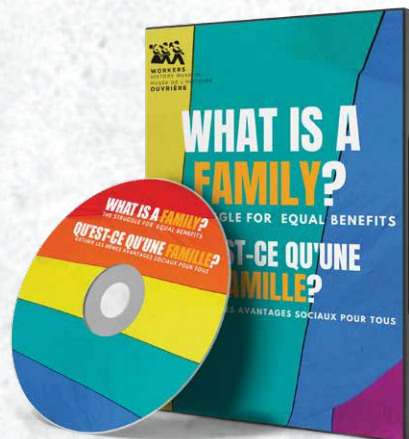
Website

We hope you have checked out the new site and will continue to do so. We are always looking for input for some of the items on both the website and on our Facebook page. Contact info@workershistorymuseum.ca if you have an idea.



What is A Family? The Struggle for Equal Benefits

By the end of 2022 we were at 1395 views on YouTube. We have produced some DVDs for those of you who want your own copy. The cost is \$20. Contact the treasurer@workershistorymuseum.ca for more details.



Women at the Bargaining Table. White-Collar Unionization at Carleton University

We extended our rights to use Helen Reddy's song "I Am Woman" in perpetuity with Universal Music. We have produced some DVDs for those who want their own copy. Contact the treasurer@workershistorymuseum.ca for more details.

Bonnie Robichaud Book and Interview

Between the Lines published the book May 8, 2022. We heard in December that the first print run was almost sold out. We do have some copies for sale at \$20. Contact the treasurer@workershistorymuseum.ca for more details.

We interviewed Bonnie for our website. Hear in her own words what she faced at work and how she was successful at the Supreme Court of Canada.





2022 calendar



We dedicated our 2023 calendar to **Skilled Tradespeople** with a focus on young women joining the trades. Our thanks to the Ontario Building & Construction Tradeswomen for providing us with photos of several women apprentices in different trades.

Many trades active at confederation still exist, carpenters, bricklayers, cobblers, blacksmiths, cartwrights, etc., but they have seen many changes, including an increase in women's participation. Few blacksmiths are still around, but the number of metal workers has increased significantly. Iron workers, plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters use techniques like electric arc welding, unknown at confederation.

Thanks to our sponsors – Union of Canadian Transportation Employees (UCTE); Union of Taxation Employees (UTE); Union of National Employees (UNE); Ontario Public Service Employees

Union (OPSEU) Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE); National Union of Public and Government Employees (NUPGE); AGR Insurance Brokers Inc.; Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen; and the City of Ottawa.

Calendar sales have been good and we say thank you to everyone for supporting this project as it was one of our fundraising activities for 2022.

Summer Students



The Workers' History Museum was not successful in getting approval for summer students through Young Canada Works in 2022. This is the first time we had no students to work on the collection or research projects.

However, we were very pleased that our summer student from 2021 Meranda Gallupe-Paton was elected to the Board of Directors in March and has continued working on our comic book about the early years of the Jewish community in Ottawa, highlighting the work of peddlers across the city and beyond. We had hoped to have the comic book finished by the end of 2022 but

some software problems mean it will be released in 2023.



In December 2021, we hired **Jenna Emslie** a graduate from Carleton University with her master's degree. She worked on the research and set-up of an online exhibit titled *Pandemics, People and Public Health: Stories from the Frontline* in 2020. The exhibit will address pandemics experienced by people in the Ottawa area over the last 130 years. Delays with this project due to the shutdown of various archives during 2020, 2021 and 2022 due to COVID-19 restrictions have resulted in it not being finalized in 2022. It is on hold until we can get the required photos from Library and Archives Canada.



Pat McGrath Scholarship



We had several students apply for the 2022 Pat McGrath Scholarship.

The successful applicant is Sarah Kadach from Vernon BC. Her submission was about “Labour’s Contribution to the Community”. It will be posted on the website once it is translated.

Other News

Our partnership with Fortune Farms to sell their maple syrup as a fundraising event for the Museum has been very well received. We sold 169 litres during 2022. We hope that people will continue to support this venture in 2023. It is interesting how many people wondered if we were selling whiskey when they saw the bottles at our events.

We held our annual President’s Challenge in November and December with the President matching the first \$500 in donations. This year thanks to everyone being generous, we raised \$1,650. This money will help cover costs for several projects.



Our chair, Belief, has now found a home at the Atelier at Saint Paul University. We will be holding a formal launch early in 2023.



Image Collection

The Museum's image collection continues to expand, with its growth inhibited only by the image archivist's time and energy. The number of images and related documents in the collection stood at 6361 at year's end. As the collection grows, it is better able to contribute to the other projects underway by the museum, including the annual calendar, and early in 2023 will be the source of large-format printed images for sale at events as a fund-raiser.

Among the new editions were several hundred rare images of workers in their workplaces from a 1930s Canadian edition Grolier Encyclopedia, along with text from its volumes describing the nature of the industrial and trade work, sometimes in amazing detail. Another rare find was a set of eight 2 1/4 inch glass slides (popularly "magic lantern" slides) depicting a hunger march in Boston in 1932. As nearly as can be determined, they are unique: other archives have images of the event, but not apparently these.

Supporters of the Museum are encouraged to dig out of their family albums images of themselves or their family at work. Even if you are unwilling to surrender a hardcopy photograph of grand-dad at work or behind the plow, or his union card, the museum offers pickup, professional care and return of anything loaned for digitizing. To arrange this, contact images@workershistorymuseum.ca.

Our thanks goes out to Karen Mackenzie of Etobicoke for reaching out to us to offer a splendid large-scale image of the entire staff of Hughes-Owens Corporation in Ottawa in 1941. The size and resolution of the print is so unusual that it is suspected that the company's wartime aviation optics were used to create it.

One of the joys of the collection is discovering lost histories that they record. It might be images from vanished ghost towns of Ontario, showing dozens of people at a house-raising event, in a tiny town that, in a few decades, would be gone entirely, save for that lone photo. Or, it might be the name of a tug on a 1905 postcard that led to the family that owned it, and their grandchildren still living in Ottawa. It was also the opportunity for the image archivist to deliver a presentation on the subject to the Ottawa branch of Ontario Ancestors last September.

Materials to be absorbed in 2023 will include an extract from the Chaudière Collection of health and safety signs, albums of labour history news clippings to be digitized from Ken Clavette's seemingly limitless personal archive, and much else acquired randomly from the universe and donations. Also looming in 2023 is the long-planned photographic documenting of the Museum's artefacts.

Looking forward to 2023, the Museum hopes to complete the digital record of the artefact collection. A large part of this will involve photographing from multiple angles all of the artefacts, under properly controlled lighting with catalogue numbers and a colour swatch included. While not technically difficult, preparing a facility and lighting, and then swapping the artefacts through at a reasonable pace, will be a challenge, to be followed by a laborious post-processing exercise before the images can be absorbed into the digital collection catalogue. Still, once completed, the Museum will be in a better position to loan out or consider exhibits involving our holdings.



2023 Plans

January: Moving in to our new office, L233, located at 223 Main Street which is part of Saint Paul University's Social Innovation Workshop (the Atelier)

January-February: Hiring an employee to assist us with projects and administration work on a full-time basis

January through December: Partnering with Fortune Farms to sell their maple syrup. The cost is \$25 a litre for either golden, amber or dark.

January through August: Working on the 2024 calendar showing pictures of working class houses in the city and countryside before they are lost as houses are torn down or gentrified.

March: WHM Annual General Meeting on March 16th

April: Launch of the Jewish Street Peddler's comic book

Spring: Launch of Pandemic online exhibit if photos are received

Summer months: Hiring a summer student to do research work on various projects

During 2023 various unions are holding their conventions and many will be in-person, so we are hoping to have a booth at many of them.

We have started work on a new project, CUPE Local 2204, about the beginnings of unionized day care centres in Ottawa during the 1970s. We are going to start with a podcast and perhaps a video about the work done by predominately women to get fair wages, benefits and good working conditions.

Here's to another great year for the Workers' History Museum!